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CEREBUS
mothers & daughters
8

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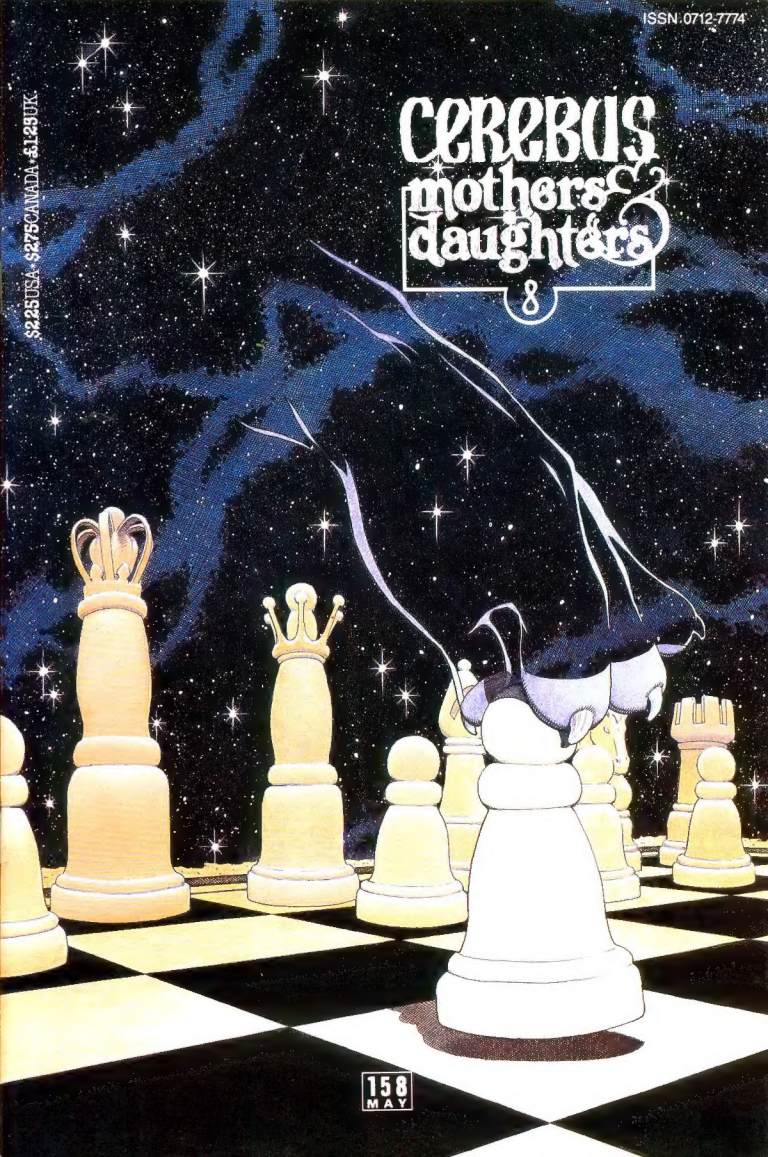

158
MAY

NOTE • FROM • THE PRESIDENT

Everything that could possibly go wrong with the Denver stop went wrong. It's April 29 and time to write this stuff up for you folks, because we're really up against deadline time and Friday I depart for Miami and the Great Eastern Convention with the one and only Will Eisner and from there to the Capital City Trade Show in Madison Wisconsin.

As I said, everything that could go wrong with the Denver stop went wrong. Wayne, who is one of the world's greatest comic store owners, and whose *Time Warp* outlet is (consequently) one of the world's greatest comic book stores got virtually nothing of what had been promised to the tour stores. Not only didn't he get the reprint volumes, but Larry Marder's ad slicks got misplaced somewhere along the way, the Tour posters never showed up and Bob Chapman phoned from Graphitti the day before to apologize for not sending a shipment of Cerebus T-shirts. I found out later from Wayne that he had been a clerk in one of the Mile High stores on the 1982 Tour and hadn't been introduced to me at the time, even though he was probably one of the biggest Cerebus boosters in Colorado. Guess what? *This* time, I must have talked to everyone who works in the store *except* Wayne when we were setting things up. The funny thing was, it was still a great signing; nice line-up of people, large display of Cerebus comics. John Christian of *Paper Heroes*, which is the sponsor store for Texas, was in Denver visiting and I felt so sorry for Wayne, having to sit at dinner and listen to all the things we have planned for Texas. I did promise Wayne that we *will* be back at *Time Warp* some time after the Tour, and this time, we're going to do everything right. Big turn-out at the Great Eastern Convention and Ger and I barely had time to look up a few times through the six hours it took to sign all the books.

★★★★★★★★★★

Chicago was mind-blowing. Absolutely mind-blowing. Gary Colabuono who used to be one of the most traditional store owners in the known universe ("You draw comics, Marvel guys draw comics; their comics sell better than your comics. Waddaya expect me to do about it?") has changed one hundred and eighty degrees in his thinking since he joined forces with genius *Beanworld* creator (and Nexus of All Comic Book Realities) Larry Marder. He pulled out all the stops for the Chicago appearances at *Moondog's* Mt. Prospect and *Moondog's* Lincoln Park; hired the PR firm of Lekas and Levine (Hi, Joanne! Hi, Noreen!) to do the media promotion and, man, did we get results! The front cover of *New City*, Chicago's hottest arts and entertainment weekly, articles in the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Sun-Times* and the *Herald*, as well as radio interviews on WGN and the Ed Tyll show on WLUP (where Gary and Larry both turned into a couple of fan-boys when they got to meet him after the interview). So impressed was I with L & L that we've engaged the Dynamic Duo of Media to work with Greg Ketter at *Dreamhaven* to push Minneapolis through the roof. I want to say a special hello to Phil at Moondog's Lincoln Park store who has come close to breaking several criminal statutes in his efforts to force people to read *Cerebus*. It was our biggest turn-out so far as the signing which was originally scheduled for one hour, then rescheduled for two hours, ended up running a little over *five and a half hours*. I limped happily back to the hotel and after dinner went up to my room and wrapped my throbbing right arm in a spare Holiday Inn blanket. Although attendance at the Sunday convention was just average or a little below for Great Eastern (Chicago is one of their better towns), we had one of our best turn-outs of Cerebus fans yet. What else? I'd like to thank Linda Yousif, Steve Harald and Fred Levin for their hospitality at the local Diamond warehouse and all the retailers who over-looked my jet-lag/exhaustion at eight in the morning after I had been up until two (EST) doing the WLUP interview.

But the biggest and most important development has to be Born Again Gary (Halaleujah! I can see the Alternatives!). When the owner of the largest chain of comic book stores in the mid-west sees it as his responsibility (his RESPONSIBILITY!) to make the best comic books *sell* the best; when he readily agrees to have a free-standing Cerebus display constructed as soon as Ger and I get around to drawing a finished design (at HIS expense); and when he agrees to make the design and plans available to other interested stores for FREE; well, words really do fail me. But, believe it, campers, a new day is dawning for the large retail chains across the Great Republic and with Gary Colabuono at the wheel, there will only be two choices.

Catch up.

Or Miss Out.

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CEREBUS

NO. 158 **MAY 1992**

DAVE SIM
President

GERHARD
Vice-President

LINDA BERZINS
Typesetting

MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS
a novel

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BOOK ONE
(Cerebus 151 to Cerebus 162)
Flight

•

BOOK TWO
(Cerebus 163 to Cerebus 174)

•

BOOK THREE
(Cerebus 175 to Cerebus 188)

•

BOOK FOUR
(Cerebus 189 to Cerebus 200)

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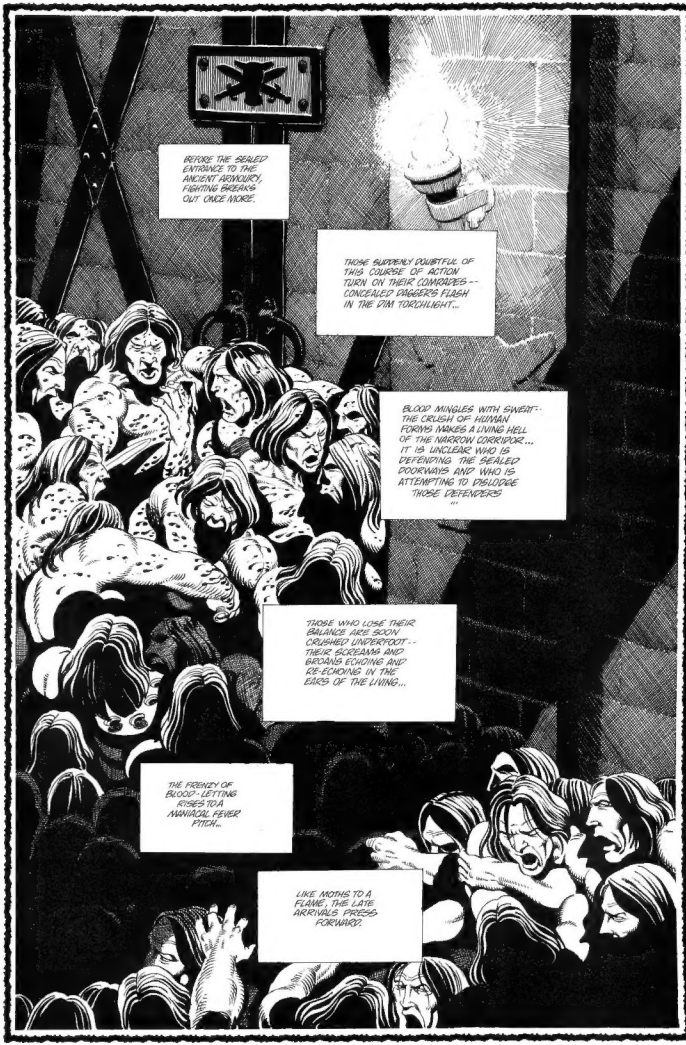
SOMEWHERE VERY HIGH UP AND VERY FAR AWAY, THE DEADLY CHESS GAME BEGINS AS THE LIVING CEREBUS BATTLES FOR CONTROL OF THE MANY-HUED MULTIVERSE...
CIRIN'S ASCENSION IS JEOPARDIZED BY INTERNAL CONFLICTS WITHIN HER OCCUPATIONAL GOVERNMENT.
TWO BLOCKS AWAY TO MY LEFT A CITIZEN OF ROACHLAND THINKS OF ASSASSINATING ME AND THROWING HIMSELF ON THE MERCY OF THE CIRINISTS
HE TURNS TO MENTION IT TO HIS COMPANION ...
TUNG
SMUT
HALF A SECOND SLOWER ...
AND I'D'VE HAD A CONSPIRACY ON MY HANDS...

It has been my policy not to interfere with your life. Capricious aspects of my consciousness have, on occasion, violated that rule. But it is only now, now that you have seen the futility of grasping after power and wealth and notoriety that it seems worthwhile for me to interact with you. The greatest danger is that our discourse might alter the future course of events and your place in them. But, frankly, in recent days, very little has been unfolding in the manner proscribed. As a precaution, I will limit the information which I impart to you to self-description. This minimizes the risk of some catastrophe taking place, but it in no way eliminates that chance. You have a reform-minded spirit. In many of my lives, I have been a reformer and if you listen to me carefully and consider, thoughtfully, what I say, there is every possibility that you might avoid the mistakes and pitfalls I have faced. There is nothing wrong with making mistakes, but one should always make new ones. Repeating mistakes is a hallmark of dim consciousness.

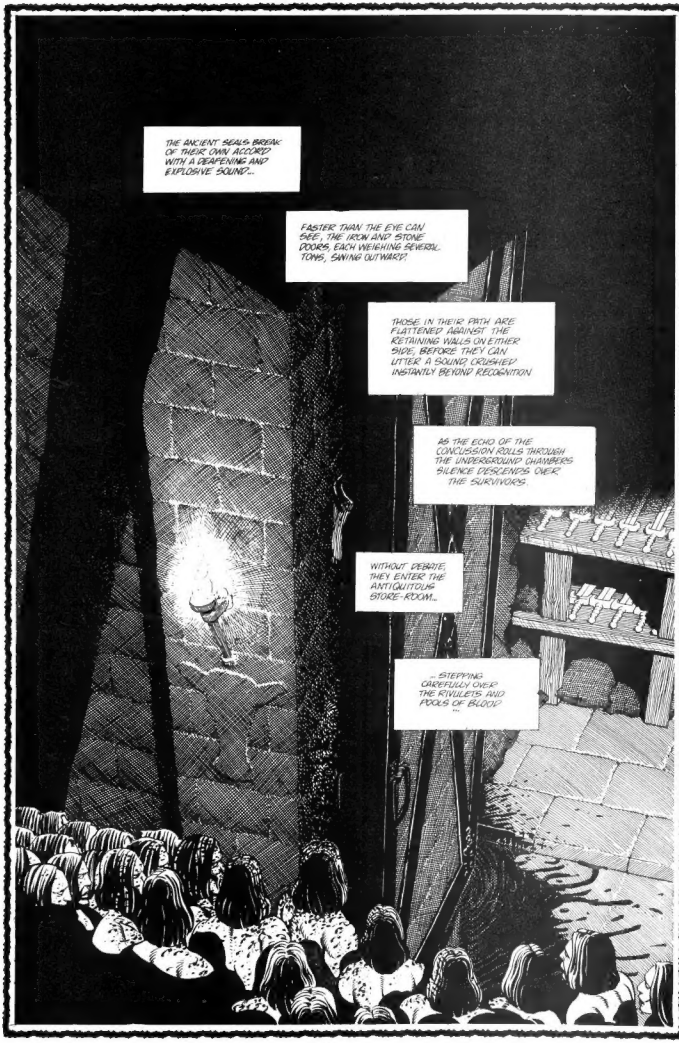
Reform is the centerpiece of the story I told you. Formation and reformation. The fragment detaching from the whole; its disposition and course. All that encompasses human experience is contained therein. Consider the pawn. It has detached itself from the larger entity; disengaged itself from its King and embarks upon a course of action, a series of events and interchanges and discourses. Chess, you see, was never invented. Chess is merely The Story seeking a physical manifestation and finding it. For as long as there has been Awareness, there has been Chess. Each entity maneouvers its pieces on many boards simultaneously and each entity is itself a chess piece of many aspects. We choose our conduct in the many games in progress. In some, we are neutralized; and are impediments only. In some, we are more active, influencing and shaping the nature of the game until it becomes our own. In some, we are mere casualties; early victims of the ebb and flow of events, watching that which unfolds from the sidelines; powerless to intervene.

As the configuration of the board changes, so does the existence and disposition of the pieces.

My first life as a Reformer, the Judge told you about.


BEFORE THE SEALED ENTRANCE TO THE ANCIENT ARMOURY, FIGHTING BREAKS OUT ONCE MORE.
THOSE SUDDENLY DOUBTFUL OF THIS COURSE OF ACTION TURN ON THEIR COMRADES -- CONCEALED DAGGERS FLASH IN THE DIM TORCHLIGHT...
BLOOD MINGLES WITH SWEAT -- THE CRUSH OF HUMAN FORMS MAKES A LIVING HELL OF THE NARROW CORRIDOR... IT IS UNCLEAR WHO IS DEFENDING THE SEALED DOORWAYS AND WHO IS ATTEMPTING TO DISLODGE THOSE DEFENDERS ...
THOSE WHO LOSE THEIR BALANCE ARE SOON CRUSHED UNDERFOOT -- THEIR SCREAMS AND GROANS ECHOING AND RE-ECHOING IN THE EARS OF THE LIVING...
THE FRENZY OF BLOOD-LETTING RISES TO A MANIACAL FEVER PITCH...
LIKE MOTHS TO A FLAME, THE LATE ARRIVALS PRESS FORWARD.

He is well-named for he seems unable to relate a story without passing his judgement on it. Although he purports to be impartial and dispassionate, he reveals himself through his interpretation of the events related. He passed over the Golden Age of the Sepran Empire, dismissing it with a few phrases about being a loosely-knit collection of hamlets, ports and provinces. It was, I assure you, quite nearly Vanaheim on Earth. The greatest freedom for the greatest number, government control so decentralized as to be almost non-existent. I was a Noble, living in a disputed area near the Red Marches at the time that taxation was introduced; tribute paid directly to a governing Church body in Serrea. Although I was dismissed as an hysteric, I knew the effect this would have on people's personal freedoms. Unable to convince any influential personage of the dire future in store, I resolved to raise my own army and conquer the city-state of lest and institute the same freedoms and policies which had allowed the Sepran Empire to flourish for many, many years. His description of the raising and training of my army is accurate in every detail. He failed to mention that I had taken the name Suenteus Po in tribute to a great historian who had led the Sepran Empire away from the pitfall of centralized government several hundred years before.


THE ANCIENT SEALS BREAK OF THEIR OWN ACCORD WITH A DEAFENING AND EXPLOSIVE SOUND...
FASTER THAN THE EYE CAN SEE, THE IRON AND STONE DOORS, EACH WEIGHING SEVERAL TONS, SWING OUTWARD.
THOSE IN THEIR PATH ARE FLATTENED AGAINST THE RETAINING WALLS ON EITHER SIDE, BEFORE THEY CAN UTTER A SOUND CRUSHED INSTANTLY BEYOND RECOGNITION.
AS THE ECHO OF THE CONCUSSION ROLLS THROUGH THE UNDERGROUND CHAMBERS SILENCE DESCENDS OVER THE SURVIVORS.
WITHOUT DEBATE, THEY ENTER THE ANTIQUITOUS STORE-ROOM...
... STEPPING CAREFULLY OVER THE RIVULETS AND POOLS OF BLOOD ...

He said that when my army was prepared, I raised my hand, pointed east and said one word; "Kill"

Again, he reveals himself, for in point of fact, the word that I invoked was "Freedom."

Consider the difference and the implications of that difference. For it is the nature of the judgemental to see only Death in Freedom and to see them as interchangeable. Freedom to them is latitude, self-indulgence, mindless willfulness and the imposition of the chaotic on their precious sense of order. He saw me as saying "You are free to kill and cause wide-spread destruction. Do as thou wilt." What I was saying was "What we have in this place is dying, atrophying, becoming corrupt. We must go elsewhere and begin anew."

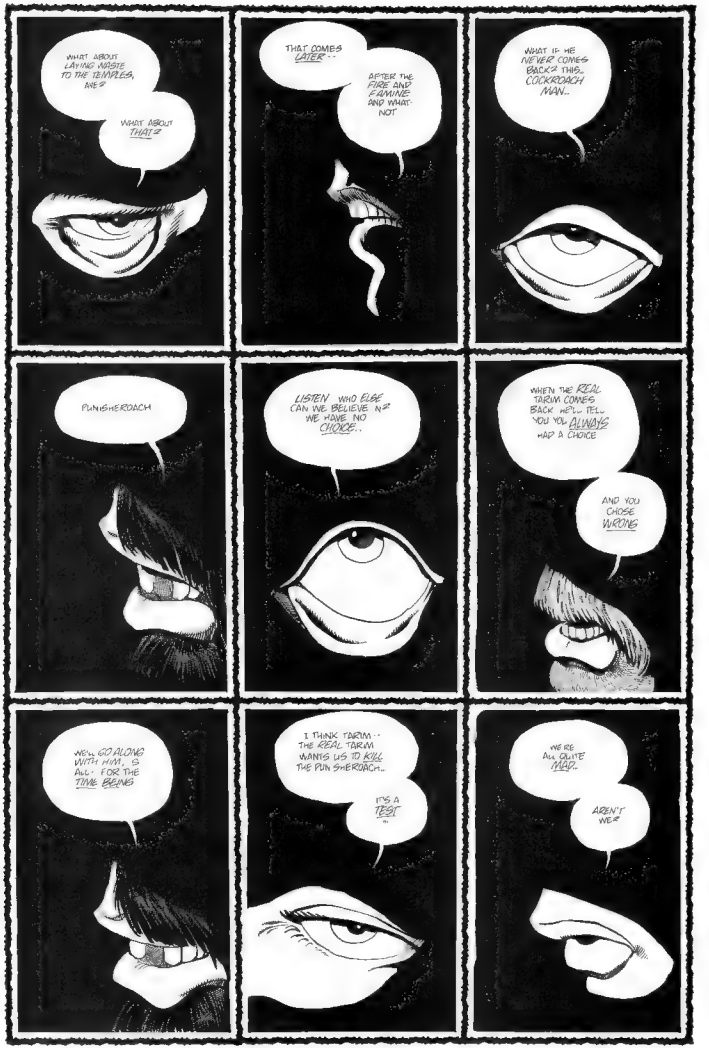
A CITIZENESS OF ROACHLAND PEERING AT ME THROUGH A RAIL FENCE, THINKING OF PERFORMING UNSPEAKABLE ACTS OF SEXUAL PERVERSION UPON MY ROACH-PERSON FOR DAYS AND DAYS UNTIL, IN A MOMENT OF WEAKNESS, I DESERT THE LIVING CERBERUS AND MAKE HER THE QUEEN OF ROACH-LAND! ...
TUNG
SMUT
THE CLOSEST CALL YET.

SHE WHAT?!
SHE... SELF THAT YOU HAD HAD A VISION - THAT THE SPHERE SHOULD BE FORTY-SIX METERS ACROSS INSTEAD OF THIRTY THREE.
SHE INSTRUCTED ME HAMMOND TO MAKE THE NECESSARY.
THAT IDIOT!!
THAT-- THAT-- CUNT!!
IT WAS A DREAM I TOLD HER ABOUT
I WAS JUST MAKING CONVERSATION
MM I RAWTHER SUSPECTED THAT WAS..

I WANT HER HEAD.
SHAVED.
AND THEN, I WANT IT GIVEN READING
PENIS BRAIN.
HUNG.
AROUND HERS NECK
AND THEN I WANT HER FROG-MARCHED
TO THE FILTHIEST.
UGLIEST.
MARKET PLACE IN THE LOWER CITY!
I WANT HER STRIPPED.
NAKED.
AND THEN FLOGGED TO WITHIN
AN INCH
OF HER MISERABLE.
CUNT.
LIFE.
YES
GREAT CIRIN.

I WAS AN ILLUSION I TELL YOU
CERBERUS IS DEAD
NO HE'S ALIVE.
HE'S THE LIVING TARIM
HE HAS TO BE
BLASPHEMY
IF IT IS HIM WHERE DID HE GO? I'LL ANSWER ME THAT WHERE DID HE GO?
HE'S PLAYING CAT AND MOUSE WITH THEM. THAT'S ALL
THE MINUTE THEY LET THEIR GUARD DOWN
I'M TELLING YOU HE NEVER EXISTED IN THE FIRST PLACE
IT'S ALL A TRICK
AN ILLUSION
SURE IT'S THE CHURCH-- WEEDING OUT THE UNBELIEVERS
THAT'S ALL...
WHAT IF HE IS TARIM? WHAT IF HE'S TESTING US TESTING OUR FAITH?
OH HE'S THE LIVING TARIM. ALL RIGHT
HE'S FULFILLED THE PROPHECIES

OF COURSE OUR FAMILY HAS ALWAYS BEEN PIVOTAL IN THE BUILDING TRADE IN ZEST, SO I'M CERTAIN CIRIN WILL BE...
MRS. COPPER
THATCHER
WHAT IS IT? I'M VERY BUSY
THE DIRECTOR OF INTERNAL HARMONY WOULD LIKE A WORD WITH YOU
THE DIRECTOR OF INTERNAL HARMONY? WHAT THE HELL DOES SHE WANT?
I'M NOT COMPLETELY CERTAIN...
BUT I BELIEVE IT INVOLVES A SHORT VISIT TO THE LOWER CITY...

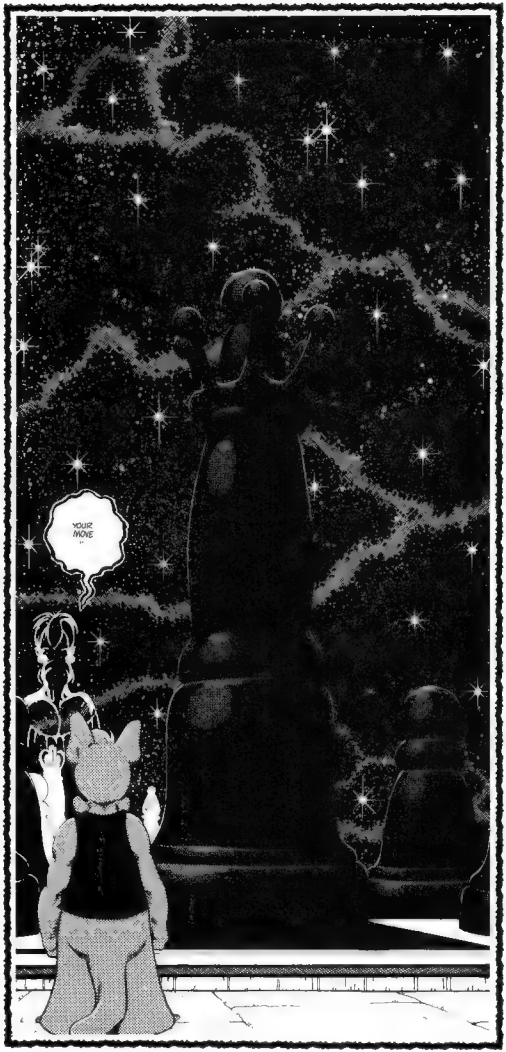

WHAT ABOUT LAYING SIEGE TO THE TEMPLES, EH?
WHAT ABOUT THAT?
THAT COMES LATER--
AFTER THE FIRE AND FAMINE AND WHAT-NOT
WHAT IF HE NEVER COMES BACK? THIS COCKROACH MAN...
PUNISHEROACH
LISTEN WHO ELSE CAN WE BELIEVE IN? WE HAVE NO CHOICE...
WHEN THE REAL TARUM COMES BACK HE'LL TELL YOU YOU ALWAYS HAD A CHOICE
AND YOU CHOSE WRONG
WE'LL GO ALONG WITH HIM, I SUPPOSE FOR THE TIME BEING
I THINK TARUM-- THE REAL TARUM WANTS US TO KILL THE PUNISHEROACH...
IT'S A TEST
WE'RE ALL QUITE MAD.
AREN'T WE?

It is as if the Goddess herself has unleashed the forces of Chaos upon me I am betrayed on all sides by those I have trusted implicitly I feel the over-whelming need once more, to have Astoria brought to me, to demand that she tell me all she knows of Cerebus and his false miracles And yet I am certain that it is only a series of coincidences which impede my progress, nothing more Improbable events, but they are easily explainable within the confines of natural law They are unexpected, true, but they are

My death, he described accurately. What seems a perverse coincidence, an inexplicable twist of fate; over-estimating the height of my horse; falling; being killed instantly, was, in actuality, the culmination of many moves on many chess-boards. An inevitability; a convergence of the necessary and the expedient in many realities and on many levels. I am convinced, in retrospect, that I would have succeeded. That the flourishing of freedom in the Feldwar Valley would have made the rapid corruption and disintegration of freedom in the Sepran Empire vivid by contrast, and would have brought about a popular uprising and a revival of our old ideals.

But such was not to be the case.

For it was my son, Alfred, who would lead the assault on Iest.


YOUR MOVE

AH

ANOTHER MYSTERIOUS APPEARANCE
THE FORMER PONTIFF OF THE EASTERN CHURCH -- BELIEVED LONG-DEAD
A HIDDEN PRIEST CARL? HEIN.
WELCOME
WELCOME BACK TO MESH.

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Dear Dave,

I must start off by saying that I have not just broken up with my girlfriend and at this moment I am not stoned. Having gotten that out of the way, I want to tell you about an interesting incident. A couple of days ago a guy came into my grandfather's tattoo parlor (that's his card that I included). This guy wanted a special design made up of a "cartoon character" is how my grandfather described it. Knowing that I was into that kind of thing, my grandfather showed me the design and lo and behold there was the Earth-pig born himself. So through the efforts of my grandfather and I we will hopefully have many people in the Northeast marked for life with pictures of Cerebus.

Til #300,

Jason T. Breitweg
M.U. Box 64
Bowdoin College
Brunswick, ME
USA 04011

P.S. If you want one of these tattoos, Dave, I think I can arrange to get you one for free.

P.P.S. I am dying to see Cerebus use the Earth-pig snout punch. Will we see it again?

By the time I had seen my tenth Cerebus tattoo, I figured it was time that we reissued the t-shirts. Thanks for the offer, but, uh, no thanks, eh?

★★★★★★★★★★

Dave,

I've always told myself that the letters written to you and the letters that you typically print are on the whole tiresome and redundant.

However, today I am going to renege on that point. I've been trying to catch up on *Cerebus* because I haven't been able to make it to the shop for a while and I bought a couple of issues and I consumed the story quickly and in trying to make more of the purchase I decided to read the letter pages just for fun. (I don't care if it is a run-on sentence, this isn't Reader's Digest you know.)

At first it's the same old thing, then there's this strange letter from someone known as 'K-Man'. It's about his flirtatious neo-affair with this woman he calls 'the other'.

It struck a definite chord.

My affair was a little more definite and real and sexual.

She came to work at the bar and she had waited tables before. Still, she came to me for advice on certain situations that she had not encountered at her last job. I was the most experienced person at the restaurant, and at the risk of sounding conceited, the most laid back. I was constantly being asked how I could remain so calm during rushes and why didn't the customers ever push my buttons. It just came natural was my only answer. I, honestly, didn't know.

I asked my manager if I should ask her out, because the manager always knows everything about everybody. The manager just laughed and said, "Forget it, she's married." I felt rejected even though I hadn't done anything and she (the girl) had never given me any reason to think I should.

Every night after the bar was closed, it was the tradition amongst us stiffs to sit and have a few strong ones and wind down. (I believe this to be an international tradition amongst all bar workers/waitrons/servers.) To my chagrin, SHE could only stay around for one and at the most, two; then she would have to run home or her "husband would be mad at (her) for staying out so late."

So I would always rag her about it. I would ask her what kind of an ogre she was married to that didn't allow her out without him stapled to her side. I would also say things to other people making sure she could hear me, things like, "Why don't we all stay out all night long and drink and play pool and go dancing? But, don't bother asking (SHE) because she has to run home to Big Daddy." Eventually, she started staying out in protest to her husband and to prove me wrong.

I have to say that at first I had no conscious thoughts of seduction, and that later on I had no conscience, period. But then later on it started coming up that SHE and I always stared at each other, and that people were suspicious. I started hearing that she had thought that I was soooo funny and what a good sense of humor I had and how she was sort of attracted to me, but she would *never* consider acting on it.

Then came the fated night . . .

She had decided to stay out all night. We all went to this after-hours place and drank vodkas with a splash of OJ and everyone got very drunk. The place had a small dance floor and there was a jukebox. Someone got the bright idea to play all these slow songs and make everyone choose partners and slow dance. It was a dream come true, because I had been pining for her all night.

Before I continue, I should say that her husband had filled in for our doorman one night the week before and he and I had gotten along famously, although he was sort of a jerk about them staying out after work. I also had dinner with them at their house one night while the affair was going on.

Well on with the tale . . .

She made a bee-line straight for me when the music started, all the people with us started oohing and aahing as if they had just been let in on this big secret. I played dumb like I didn't understand what was going on. Then she did it. This married woman who I had been putting down and sort of offending, possibly distressing emotionally, started kissing my neck. I was completely blown away. I marked it up to intoxication and marital boredom. There was this big, black guy that was not a big drinker and had appointed himself everyone's protector, and during the dance break he quietly pulled HER aside and asked if she knew what she was doing. I didn't hear her answer, but she grabbed her purse and ran like a scared rabbit. "Oh well, she's just drunk," I thought to

myself, "that's that."

After that night she didn't work for a few nights and I have to say I was looking for her. I kind of had this like ache for her to come back. Well, when she came back to work she and I had to "close" together. I don't know if that was planned by someone or if it just happened. The whole night we didn't speak except in a business-like way. Hell, what was I supposed to do?

So after closing, I started home. I worked downtown and I just walked home, cause I lived downtown at the time. Everyone at work knew how I walked home and what route I took, it made me feel safer and all that. So who should come driving up beside me a couple of blocks from work? Take a guess. Yeah, HER! How'd you know?

She took me home and we sat in the alley by my building and talked for about . . . six hours! The sun had been up a couple of hours when she finally had to go.

While we sat there in her car, she did most of the talking. She expounded on all sorts of things mainly dealing in the subject of marriage and unhappiness. Her husband was a pre-med student. He would someday be rich and give her all the things that she could possibly want, but at the moment he was quite a bore. They had not slept together in a long while. He was constantly hounding her about her whereabouts, because she had (GASP!) had an affair with one of his best friends the year before they had been married. She was talking to me as if she thought of me as a close friend.

I told her that if she was that unhappy she should get a divorce, but she answered that it would be "too much trouble." Also, "her family would be soooo upset." I told her she had to think of herself and her well-being and fuck the rest of the world. She started to weep a little and I put my arm around her and we just sat like that for a while. It was nice to say the least.

I told her that everyone at work thought there was some sort of sexual tension going on between us or that we at least had a mutual admiration for another. She looked at me and said,"Like there's not?" I almost fainted.

We talked about it and we talked about her marriage some more. Then we started getting tired and I asked her if we could do this again sometime and she said, "How about tomorrow night?" I quickly answered, "Sure!"

As I was getting out of the car, I said, "If you weren't a married woman, I would try to kiss you good night." She replied, "Oh well, I guess we'll never know, will we?" I thought about that reply all day 'til I saw her again.

Needless to say we kissed the next night. ALOT. We didn't sleep together that night although we did discuss our common basest desires for one another. We agreed to just let it happen naturally, at it's own pace. It did a few nights later.

In the time until then, we were like giddy high school kids in love for the first time in our lives. We talked about our likes and dislikes. We both liked that old big band sound and we listened to Harry Connick Jr. all the time. (Fuck anyone that thinks that music sucks! Most of the music that everyone thinks is soooo cutting edge and cool i.e. *Jane's Addiction* and *Fugazi* and *Dead Kennedys* is just irrelevant bullshit that will be forgotten by 2000.) She liked to drink Bloody Mary's at lunch and spend the day tipsy sometimes and so did I. It pisses off the world if you can get drunk in the middle of the day and they have to be completely sober behind their ties and pleated skirts. Just silly things like that.

I got her to read Cerebus a couple of times but it's so hard sometimes, you know what I mean?

So things went along great for a while and then we slept together and then things went along even greater for a while and she bought me a bunch of stuff with her husband's money and I bought her a bunch of stuff with the rent money and then she and I got into it with the bosses at the restaurant because of the "fraternization rules" and shit, but we got all that worked out.

THEN, they hired this new manager that I knew from long ago and he was an absolute DICK! He hated me and I hated, no, loathed him. Well, he was down on me and HER from the git-go. Finally, I decided enough was enough and I quit in the middle of my shift in the middle of the busiest night we had ever seen because he was acting like a big ridiculous brat. I halfway expected HER to quit too, and when she didn't it pissed me off a little.

Well, following that incident, I decided I was a little put out with the town I had called home for 99% of my 26 years of life. So my dad had been hounding me about moving to this small town in Mississippi and going to school for free and learning some kind of skill so I could have a real life, instead of just waiting tables and drinking up my money for the rest of my life. So in a feat of fate, I jumped at it.

SHE tried to remain a part of my life, but it didn't or couldn't work out for some reason. Before I had left, she had been thinking about getting a divorce but then had gotten cold feet and told me she felt like she was choosing between the logical and the fun. Her husband being the logical (of course) and the fun, myself. Hey, it hurt, I'll admit it, and when I moved out of town I knew it was pretty much over. The whole affair had lasted from May to July of '91.

So here it is about eight months later and I still think about her from time to time even though I've had a couple of little trysts in the meantime, they were nothing compared to HER.

The really odd thing is the day before I bought these Cerebi, I wrote her a letter asking her how she was and if she was happy where she was and all that. I don't expect anything to come of it, but if she were to write back, the letter will or should come back tomorrow or the next day. I'll let you know if anything comes.

I know that it has nothing to do with the rest of the letter, but I think that Cerebus is a great thing and will indeed make history in some way. 300 seems all too close.

Here is a Wilde quote for all those "Angry New Agers" out there: Industry is the root of all ugliness.

"Angry New Agers" is something I read in a Matt Groening cartoon. If refers to all those Brazilian Serape-wearing, sandal-footed, tie-dyed hippy-wannabe CHILDREN who grew their hair long because they thought it was *cool*, not because they had to or couldn't afford to get it cut or grew it because they thought they were rebelling even though long hair is socially accepted in today's society. The same people who go around with dead-head stickers on their cars but don't have any idea what they are, "They just look cool! and the Dead rock man!" The same people who don't eat meat but then go out and buy those Swedish

sandals because they're cool man, that are made of leather. They're also the ones who write GO VEGAN! on the walls of people's businesses who are probably vegetarians but like clean walls. They're also the nuts who thought the Gulf War was about oil, and went around saying things like "No blood for oil!" even though that had nothing to do with the real world.

And no I'm not some red-necked Southern boy who chews tobacco and thinks in the 19th century mode. I just think that fakes should be called what they are.

Although I once said that I didn't want to read bad poetry in this section, oh dammit.

Like I was saying, I think I'll type in one of my poems and see what you think, ok Dave? I mean what the Hell, right?

Here goes:

INTERPRETATION BABBLE

Open your petals, most beautiful flower, know me into the darkest night
Fawn on us your groping wisdom and deliver our names
On winged beams of light.
Heighten my loads with monkey smiles and lace of Etruscan yellow.
And lengthen my sallow soul's shelter from the ensuing
Balloons of heliumhype.

Channelled song of seeming sorrow shallow the blues men wail
This notorious night.
Observe their ebon expressions as they slowly slid from rapture
To rapturous remorse.
The steam of my shadows glistens as the silent bead of sweat
Rolls down his urban brow.
Psychadelica rules the skies of Ruralia at the crescendo of woeful moan.

Kiss, kiss my name solo softly in my ear, as I know you
'Til the next most dreary day.
Press your silky flesh next my coarsened cheek and grin to me
Your lasting love.
I have your harrowed heart cradled near my song-whispering soul,
And it warms and rewards my teary eyes and weary mind,
Petunia.

It seems that the whole time I'm typing this I keep thinking, "Why the hell am I doing this?"

Oh well.

Dave, what was the last good book you read?

This is about ten times what I originally intended to write so I'm going to call it quits now.

BYE

B.

P.S. Remember Dave. If you ever need to talk or anything just pick up a pen and let me know how you are. I'm here, bud.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dave,

I still love here as much as I ever did, even though she has left (if not me) town. She cried when she said good-bye. I cry every time I think of her—in my heart, in my soul, if not tears roll down my cheek. Two months and my pain is still as fresh as when she left. But, again, I should not begin with the truth.

No names, no names once again, and no poetry. After I sent my last letter, things changed. She was mercurial, still is for all I know. And me, I still could not deny the passion that kiss invoked. I burned with bright longing, I burned under the night sky, I burned so brightly that my love should dim the stars.

And she . . . she spoke of a passion that she could hide. She trembled for my touch and dreamed of me. Or so she said and she spoke also of the hate that grew in her, the hate and anger caused by this situation, this love that we two had wrought. Yet, she did not regret this, she embraced it and cherished it for what joy and intensity came.

Things changed elsewhere. My anger subsided, the anger I felt towards my wife left, and, of all that remained (remains) of that rage, there is perhaps a small sadness. So, I began to wear once more my ring of rows made, a ring I had set aside for another reason, a ring I would not wear because of anger. A ring that I wear now and a ring I will always wear in faith and remembrance. It is a ring that I wear for one woman that I love and a ring that is the bane of my other love.

Oh, I could see the hurt that flashed in my other love's eyes. I could see the hurt and I would fane cause that hurt. I could not remove my ring and thus stop her pain for I made a promise, a promise that was older than our love. I have broken enough promises and must be judged on that. I endeavor not to add to my lost of sins.

So the cusp came and my actions and hers caused the relationship to change. Change to where she felt the need to leave. And perhaps it was right to do so.

She has been gone two months or so (I know the exact number of days but you will have to guess, dear readers). She has gone and I love her still. And that brings us to another tale.

See, I still love her. Two months gone. I love her, and I can't shake my depression and my guilt. So I'm running wild in the night and looking for trouble.

Needless to say, trouble was easy to find for it traveled as a companion to my friends. My friends . . . I don't have but three good friends and they are not allowed in the house (rim shot, please). Pablo (not his real name, as names have been changed to hide the guilty and I think that by now we should all assume that I am going to be deliberately vague) had told me of this strip-bar that he said was of good quality. Good quality? How am I to know from quality. I'm a mere country bumpkin, a man who has never slept with another woman besides his wife (no poetry as I have said, no poems shall I ever write), a backwoods innocent.

So, we journeyed, Pablo and I, to the fabulous cities of the triangle, we journeyed to the Dynamite (the tri-nitro-toluene) Club. We made our way through the snow and down through the mountain passes to the strip bar of our choice.

Anywho, we get there and, sure enough, there are women dancing topless and rubbing themselves all over you in a cage for twenty bucks. So I get disgusting and degrading and it doesn't do me any good or any *harm!* I just don't fucking care about anything!

Except her. Except my wife. Except her. Except my wife . . .

K-Man.

Whatever goes around comes around. If you make yourself into the "correspondent" (for wont of a better term) in someone else's relationship, you can pretty much count on the "unhappy triangle" rearing its ugly visage the next time you find yourself in love. There's really nothing easier than lying to yourself about your own motives and someone else's when sex is involved. How does this all tie in with the Big Bang? Stay tuned for Book Three ("Reads") of *Mothers & Daughters*.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

Can you believe they raised the price of *Groo the Wanderer?* Like, I might pay two dollars and twenty-five cents to watch a funny looking short guy with a big nose run around with a sword and kill people. Satirical sight-gags and full-page illustrated sound-effects notwithstanding, it simply isn't worth it. Look, I've got the latest issue right here and I'll show you what I'm talking . . . wait a second, this isn't *Groo, Groo's* a color comic book . . . this is . . . oh.

Ahem.

Seriously, Dave, I was kind of curious as to the excessiveness of the last few issues. As far as *Cerebus* goes, I can't recall ever seeing so much Graphic violence (with a capital G), nudity (who is Seth modeled after, anyway? He looks a little like Andy Warhol . . . or maybe not), and action, Action, ACTION. For a brief second I was worried that you might be selling out a little (I worry about things like that . . . my friends call me Woody). Then I remembered what I was dealing with, which is what prompted me to write. "The mouth breathing public's voracious appetite for that which it . . . ostensibly . . . deplores". Dave, you have my apologies.

So I started thinking about it, and I came up with three possible rationales (none of which are mutually exclusive).

1. You were in a really bad mood when you drew them (and did you intend the Gut/Rip/Kill page in 153 as a nod to Aragones, or did it just kinda seem that way?).
2. You were attempting to illustrate the intensity of the suppressed hatred felt by Iestians towards the Cirinists, and (thank you Isaac Newton) the extreme reaction to their occupation. Even if this isn't the case, it sure worked for me. For a moment I found myself saying "Yeah! HAIL fuckin' Cerebus!" before I remembered I was alone and reading a comic book. As a realistic aside, I don't think I ever considered how dangerously volatile the situation in Northern Ireland truly is until after the last few M & D's. Was this one of your models? The similarities are striking.
3. You're responding to the growing amount of exploitation in mainstream comics. Which is not to say that they haven't always been violent and sexist, but lately it seems that you can't pick up a Marvel without seeing someone get brutally executed As funny as it was, the "double-bag first appearance" of 'Punisher-Roach' was right on the money.

My brother works in a comic book shop in New Jersey (Hi Al!), so he reads everything and knows what's going on. Recently he tried to explain to me all the developments of the past three years since I abandoned Marvels. It's pretty sad. I told him I'm not at all interested in the latest mutant circle-jerk, and I asked him how the Aardvark was doing. He told me they get two copies a month because they have two guys who request it.

Two a month! Dave, how can we reach these people? I grabbed a copy of the *Free Cerebus* special (thanks for the map, by the way; I'm a relatively new reader) and the guy at the counter didn't even know what it was. Cringing, I have to say that I think the only people picking up 'Free' are Cerebus regulars (or expatriates who couldn't handle *Melmoth*). So my last bit before winding up is an open suggestion to all lettercol readers.

I'm a little upset when I read letters from people who write that the average comic fan isn't worthy of Cerebus, then close with "I'm with you 'til #300 Dave!". Don't be so damned sanctimonious. If you really want to prove your loyalty, then work on converting those unenlightened souls to the Church and Sim and Gerhard. Here's an idea; every reader of Cerebus take the responsibility of converting one person. That's not much to ask, now is it? Loan them your phone books! Your 'Swords' collections! It's hard, I know, but remember; these people (and they aren't all kids) are buying two and three copies of *X-Force* #1 and treating them like gold. Just impress upon them how valuable your Cerebi are and they will take good care of them (although the threat of slow painful death might help to emphasize the point . . . use your own judgment). When they're hooked, they'll each be obligated to convert one more person, ad infinitum. Think about Dave's circulation doubling in six months. Am I being unrealistic here? Personally I think it would be much more satisfying to hold #300 in my hands and say "I was a part of this" instead of "I was witness to this." Think about it people.

Fanatically Yours,

Brian Zatkow
141 Comstock Place #2
Syracuse, NY
USA 13210

P.S. For the record, this is my first letter to a comic (despite the cliche of having read them for ten years). Wouldn't it be interesting to know how many proverbial cherries have been broken by Aardvark Comment? How about it, anyone out there with a complete set and some time to kill? Dave could then print it on the inside front cover in the space vacated by 'circulation' and keep a running tally or something.

P.P.S. Dave, I hope you aren't offended by my somewhat self-serving analyses of your creation, but you know, half the pleasure of reading *Cerebus* (or any other fiction) for me is trying to interpret its meaning and/or purpose. Forgive me, I was an English major and mental masturbation is just my natural tendency. Oops, wouldn't want to go stirring THAT up again, would we? Ciao.

This seems like a good place to thank all of the people who *do* make a real effort to turn their friends onto *Cerebus;* most especially those who *loan* out the reprint collections and back-issues and then live in mortal fear of what's going to happen to them (Please! Not my back-issues!). It's not for everybody (by any stretch of the imagination), but those who take to it, take to it like a duck to water.

The answer to your question is #2.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Mr. Sim,

We are writing concerning the recent *Melmoth* so called "story", a work of such unparalleled boredom that we have only just awoken. The only reason we continue to flick through *Cerebus* is because we are still incredulous at your self-indulgence, and that in our soporific state we have failed to cancel the standing order. We were overwhelmed by the lack of plot, character development, or in fact any redeeming features whatsoever. We feel you have seriously tarnished your reputation by including such blatant space-filling drivel, and it is terrible that you should attempt to hide your complete lack of original thought by almost wholly lifting the dialogue. What is more we were annoyed by your insistence that we lose all possible sympathy for the

main character by allowing his tedious life to drag on for so long. In our humble view, not being "great" comic writers of our time, it is imperative that the reader should care for at least one of the major characters to make an enjoyable story and in this respect *Melmoth* was sadly lacking.

The only slivers of interest were generated by a few incidental characters who had nothing whatsoever to do with the "story", and were mostly from previous issues. This whole exercise in tedium was so painfully an example of pretentiousness and self indulgence on your part, going as you did to such lengths in your obsession with Oscar Wilde and his death, that you lost any semblance of an interesting or relevant plot. The other two main characters, whose lack of presence and dirge of tedious monologues have caused us to forget their names, were extraordinary only in the superhuman task that they managed to be as boring as Oscar himself.

Since it is clear that you wanted to start the next major story at issue 151, we can't help wondering why you don't just miss out the intervening issues between the end of *Jaka's Story* and the beginning of *Mothers & Daughters* and save us the money and bother of wading through your overrated and irrelevant dribblings on Oscar's death.

Onto another undistinguished aspect of *Cerebus* — the letters page. We can't help wondering if you're spending more time doing (writing?) the letters page than indulging in imaginative thinking, as its length seems to be inversely proportional to the quality of the story. And indeed the lack of criticism of the appalling *Melmoth* "story" does seem to suggest you might be adopting Marvel's letter "editing" techniques. The notes from the president also seem to have suffered unduly recently. Although we never agreed with the execrable views you espoused in previous notes, at least they were more amusing than the list of tour dates which have replaced them. Perhaps if you were to present yourself to the more intelligent, discerning and critical British audience in a UK tour then we would be more interested since we could then present our views face to face instead of in a letter, which will no doubt be drowned amongst the stereotypical "praise Dave" offerings.

We hope that you will take heed of our advice, and feel sure that *Mothers & Daughters* will then be immeasurably improved. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Dave McNally, Simon Billows,
(& special guest - Jeremy Paxman)

Well, yours is really the only letter I've gotten that is this vehement in its criticism of the *Melmoth* storyline. Obviously, the easiest thing for you to do is to not include the story in your *Cerebus* collection. I felt that *Melmoth* was critical as a counter-point to *Jaka's Story* (wherein Cerebus was obviously feeling "things just can't get any worse") and as a set-up for *Mothers & Daughters*. The transition from *Jaka's Story* straight into *Mothers & Daughters* would have been too abrupt, too unrealistic and too much like Marvel Comic. To each his own.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dave! Ger! Dudes!

Well, it's been a little over a week since I came back from seven straight days of visiting the flatlands (!!) of Wisconsin and neighboring states (trust my friend Chris Tatro—the penguin/big spoon guy—to have spring break one week after mine). Ever since you visited *Comicopia*, where I said I'd bother you with a letter, I've been trying to think of what the hell I can say that will make sense or sound interesting. To make a strange story short, halfway through the week, I started getting a really strange toothache, but stuck it out until Friday evening.

It was about seven that evening when we were coming back from the trip and made a sidetrip into Canada. Windsor is a nice place, but I would have enjoyed it more, had I paid attention to metric conversion in math class—the first few miles were driven in slight confusion.

Anyway.

Halfway up route 401 my mouth decided it didn't like me anymore and staged a revolt on the left side of my jaw. Kitchener sounded like a really good place to stop for the evening. It was on our itinerary, but only to find you or A/V or at least Jaka's horse, Magic.

To make short story even shorter, we stopped at a hotel on King Street North. It was the best place we'd stayed all week. The next morning I called Dr. Franco Ferrari on River Road East (shameless plug) and, lo and behold, I had a *root canal* done!! In your very town!

First, I'd like to say that Ferrari was one of the best dentists I've ever been to. Even better than here in the States. Everyone I told this to asked me if it cost more and was worse in quality, but I think the sum was fine, and I haven't had one problem since. Canadian dentistry is boss!

Second, the ski hill across from his office took me by surprise. Where the hell did a hill that big come from??!?

Third, we found Magic. Although I thought the park would be slightly bigger and more accessible (i.e. not at the end of a dead end street), it was a great feeling to actually step into Jaka's world just for a little while. It's amazing how you made a small community playground into such a beautiful park in the middle of the woods. All community playgrounds should be done in that manner! By the way, I'm sending a pic of me on the horse, whenever I get it developed.

Fourth, we may or may not have found your house. Not to worry—I've forgotten the address already! If it was yours, it's a nice once. If it isn't well, it was nice anyway.

Fifth, Kitchener was the nicest place we visited during this trip. Although the layout of the streets are a bit loopy (Weber Street, for instance), it was a beautiful place, and I'll definitely go there again on my Niagara honeymoon with Tracey (my gal of three plus years). It's worth the trip. And the dentistry is great.

Well, Dave, I've talked your ear off enough, so I'll let you go. Please find enclosed, though, a copy of the "mini-jam" we did at *Comicopia* in Boston, complete with inking and backgrounds which were done later. I though you might like the finished product.

Thanks for making Cerebus. He is god, "Bob", and Buddha all rolled up into one short albeit brilliant aardvark. He's also an influence on my creating Murph, my character in our Jam.

May you fall asleep remembering where your toes are.

Slack.

Jon Chaisson Jingleheimer Shmitz
The SubGenius Church of the
Immaculate 10,000 lb.
Breakfast Sandwich
215 Beacon St. #3R
Boston, MA USA 02116

P.S. big spoon

P.P.S. I'm depressed. This is a short letter!

P.P.P.S. The guys at *Comucopia,* and also my friend John Corr, sez "hi."

P.P.P.P.S. Disregard Chris Tatro's statement about watching out for penguins. He's just paranoid that they'll become the new breed of popes.

I haven't been to a dentist in nearly six years. Maybe I'll give Dr. Ferrari a try.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dave,

This is just a short note to respond to a few comments you made in *Mothers and Daughters #6,* which I just read.

You mentioned disappointment over the low results generated by an auction for some of the work you brought to the Pittsburgh convention. Well, I then thought: damn! What about the rest of us "Daveheads" who aren't fortunate to be near one of the cities of the tour (either because we're in Canada or otherwise), who would be only too glad to bid top dollar for a Dave Sim / Gerhard original. I was in Montreal last fall when you were there, but much to my chagrin, there was no original artwork to be purchased.

I was just about to whip off a letter saying something to this effect, when I read your comment in Aardvark Comment, along the lines of: I'll be happy to sell you a sketch by mail. What the hell? You sell this stuff by mail? And you didn't tell me? My point is: if you are ready to sell anything my mail, please send me a list of whatever it is. If you're thinking you may not get the same financial response, then you could request closed bids by the readers. They could send in their bids for certain items and the highest bidder would get it at the amount.

For me personally, I was shocked to see that a cover went for $55. I would pay quite a whole lot more for a cover. Please let me know if there's anything we can work out. Perhaps there's something lingering in a closet somewhere that you don't think you could normally sell. Well, I'm your man.

Sincerely,

Jean-Guy Brin

A number of people made this very point about the benefit auctions; it defeats the purpose which is to earn as much money for the CBLDF as is possible. Consequently, we will be auctioning the future benefit pieces in the pages of Cerebus, as well as certain pages for our own selves. If we can get it together for this issue, the information will be in the next few pages somewhere. If not, we'll try for #159. Just so the people at the Cons don't feel left out, we'll be selling individual pages for a fixed price at each stop. See you there.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

I am writing to you on behalf of Jeff Gillette. I wish to encourage you to print more of his work. A cartoonist as talented as he is deserves an outlet and an audience.

Mark Daly
Box 390
Hampshire College
Amherst, MA
USA 01002

P.S. Oh yeah—Cerebus is good too.

I agree. I'll be contacting Jeff in the next while to find out about printing another of his great stories.

★★★★★★★★★★

To Whom It May Concern:

In an old *Cerebus* comic, I saw that you had a stuffed Cerebus that was being sold for $15.00. I would like to purchase one of these Cerebus toys. I realize that the offer is quite old, but am hopeful.

Please let me know what you find. Thank You.

Sincerely,

Laura C. Shimizu
P.O. Box 70550
Reno, NA
USA 89570-0550

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave:

I'd rather not be overly self-indulgent by carrying on about who I am, why I read *Cerebus,* my personal critiques and philosophies, etc. . . .

Suffice to say that a very important dude in my life introduced me to the series. One of the many great things he's given me.

I'm not really a softie about most matters, rather laconic really. However, one thing just made me cave in. I was reading back-issues (probably 80–95 somewhere) and I noticed the Cerebus toy.

I am usually not one for such things, but I just went APESHIT when I saw him. I want one so badly I can hardly stand it (sentimentality can emerge in bizarre and ironic ways). There is something so fucking ABSURD about a stuffed, cuddly EARTH-PIG that I am absolutely dying to have one.

It makes poetic sense to me.

Any chance of production again, or maybe finding one somewhere? He would totally kick butt next to my lace pillows and toy squirrel. I just want to be able to sleep next to Cerebus and that special guy at night.

I couldn't ask for much more than that.

Regards and respect,

Jennifer Prewitt

P.S. Hello to Gerhard!

If anyone out there has any ideas or contacts in the stuffed toy field, I get about a half dozen inquiries like this every month. I don't think we'd be talking Garfield numbers, but there's probably a few dollars to be made by some enterprising (and AUTHORISED) individual.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Everyone,

"Anarchy is the Only True Democracy".

It's true, too. What does Democracy mean? It comes from the Greek: demos (the people) and kratein (to rule). The definition commonly used is "Ruled by the People." How many countries are ruled by the people? I mean really ruled by the people. Take Canada. They say Canada's a democracy. But do Canadians remember January 1st, 1991? Almost every single last Canadian was opposed to the 7% G.S.T., right? But, still, it was rammed down our throats at the worst possible time. Is that "Ruled by the People?"

Now, what's Anarchy? Anarchy is when a person or group of people don't like the idea of others making laws for them. They make laws for themselves to follow. The people make the laws for themselves. "Ruled by the People."

So, if Anarchy is "Ruled by the People," then it must be . . . uh-huh . . . that's right . . .

"Anarchy is the Only True Democracy".

I'd love to hear anyone's views of rebutal of this.

Andrew "The Moron" McIntosh
22 Dawson St.
Whitby, Ontario
L1N 6C8
P.S. "And the MORONS Shall Inherit the Earth".

MORON 8:49

Can you imagine what the world would be like if governments really reflected the will of the people? I mean starting with public floggings on CNN?

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

I am not playing any record while I write this. Sorry. They throw you out for that kind of thing in the British Library.

Hey, ho.

Your recent (or quite-recent) obsession with Oscar Wilde puts me in mind of a story told to me by one of my old tutors at Oxford, who was a colleague of that most thorough of Oscar's biographers, Richard Ellman. Whether the »story is true or not, I leave you to judge, bearing in mind Oscar's regret concerning "the decay of lying as an art, a science and a social pleasure."

High Table at New College could hardly be described as animated. A few years ago a don had died as the first course was served, and nobody noticed until the port was passed around. His last words were, "It's very cold. So very cold." His neighbours thought he was talking about the soup. On this particular evening, around twenty fellows had gathered around the table. After having said grace in Latin they lapsed into silence, their conversation restricted by ancient etiquette which forbids the subjects of work, women who are not present and the decor of the dining rooms.

Dick Ellman arrived some minutes late. He was breathless with excitement, so much so that several diners actually looked up as he sat down, an almost unheard-of occurrence since the days of William of Wykeham.

His ensuring flagrant breach of tradition was forgivable on two grounds: he was a) the foremost literary biographer of his generation and b) American, and therefore a child in such matters.

"I," he announced, "can definitively prove Wilde's preferred method of sexual intercourse."

Nineteen faces looked up at him expectantly. He did not disappoint them.

"Fellatio."

Such scholarship! High Table murmured its approval.

There was only one dissenting voice. The twentieth don, a tiny old Emeritus professor who seemed ready to emulate his former colleague by expiring over his asparagus, asked mildly, "Giving . . . or receiving?"

Poor Ellman, the detail fanatic, could only hide his head in his hands.

So it goes.

Congratulations to Gerhard for the sphere foundry in #155.

Yours,

Brian Millar

I don't believe it for a minute, but it does make a great story. Most of the sources I read were in agreement on "giving" and "mutual musturbation". Just for the record.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

Here's the article spawned by your visit to Pittsburgh. Thanks again for your candor, forthrightness (is that a word)? and cooperation. I'm not a very experienced interviewer (my net number of interviews being one, counting you) and I was a little bit nervous. It turned out okay, I guess. Straight journalism articles are difficult to write. Maybe I'm just egocentric (or one of those narcissistic words) but it's much more fun writing your opinion.

I do have a little favor to ask of you. It seems I was so intent on writing down what you and everyone else had to say that I neglected to get your autograph. All my comics are a few hundred miles away from here so I couldn't get any of those signed either. I stuck in a sheet of paper and, maybe maybe maybe if you've got a little time, could you draw a head of Boobah? I've enclosed a self-addressed stamped envelope as well. All this is much appreciated.

I was trying to convince my girlfriend last night to read some comics and she said something along the line of, "That's just something I never understood." I pointed out (somewhat defensively) that she was "into" the Grateful Dead, not as much as a lot of people, but what was the difference? Well, I'm not *really* into the Dead, she said. I said, well, I'm not *really* into comics like a lot of people are, it just looks that way to you. And so on and so on — I'm trying to get her to read *Zot!* first, especially the last 10 issues or so because there's not a lot you have to assume with *Zot!*, not like *Cerebus*. I could just hand her the issues, tell her absolutely nothing about it and she'd get it. She's a smart woman, a little stubborn sometimes. How do you break someone into something like comics?

Ahh well, I'll figure it out. One last note about that article: It's interesting to note that the editor (who's a fairly nice guy but I keep my contact with him to a minimum) put your name down as **"David"** Sim in that little box with the quote about editors being tools of businesspeople. Little ironies like that keep me going. Take care and thank you for *Cerebus*.

Chris Winters

I really must apologize, Chris, for omitting mention of you in my Note on the Pittsburgh stop. I had completely forgotten the interview in the car in transit from Phantom of the Attic to BEM and your article was one of the best I've read. I lost your address, but if you write back, I'll be sure to get a Boobah sketch out to you.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dave,

I'm taking a lit class in Dostoevsky this quarter and I'm about halfway through *Crime and Punishment* and I'm just wondering if Dostoevsky has had any influence on your work. I find many similarities in narrative structure. I wonder if you've been influenced by his intricate plot swings through character placement or if these similarities are just maybe a synchronicity by the use of the method of serialization in writing a novel.

Sincerely,

Michael Everleth

I am sure it has something to do with serialization. The thing I've always loved most about Dostoevsky's work is his ability to thoroughly describe an event or a person without once repeating himself; gradually defining the object in question, brush stroke by brush stroke until the sharp image appears. Fortunately, in the comics medium, I can just draw whatever it is; or better yet, get Ger to do it.

GALLERY

Beginning in this issue, we will be auctioning Cerebus artwork. Some of the pieces will be auctioned to benefit the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund and some will be auctioned to benefit Gerhard and myself. Bidding on this issue's Gallery items closes July 2, 1992 at 5 p.m. EST. Bids will be accepted by mail, fax or phone until that time. The winning bidder will be informed by phone.

All items in this issue's Gallery are from the personal collection of Will Eisner and are copyright 1992 by Will Eisner. No rights for reproduction of these pages are implied by the sale of the artwork pictured, nor should it be inferred.

Good luck and may the largest bank account win ...

GALLERY

He was telling Cerebus that he had to pay a two-crown fine or spend three nights in the Garrison Town lock-up.
Cerebus told him, in no uncertain terms, that he wasn't going to jail just because some farmer had got his nose broke by slamming it repeatedly into Cerebus' foot...
Now, Dolan, he had this freelance strong-arm he kept around the place, a fella what called himself The Spirit or The Wraith or some such
He was big as a prize bull and almost as smart, some said, tho' I don't recollect anyone telling 'im this to 'is face.
"Cell number three," says Dolan "get him out of here."
I figure Cerebus must be sensitive about his height, because when the big guy said, "Let's go, shorty..."

CEREBUS JAM
number one (1985)
page twenty-two

Cerebus,
Commissioner
Dolan,
the Spirit

Cerebus penciled and inked by Dave Sim. The Spirit and Commissioner Dolan penciled and inked by Will Eisner. Backgrounds by Gerhard. Story and lettering by Dave Sim. Autographed by Eisner, Sim and Gerhard.

pen and ink on illustration board

minimum bid: $150

COMIC BOOK LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

GALLERY

CEREBUS JAM
number one (1985)
page twenty-three

Cerebus,
Commissioner
Dolan,
the Spirit

Cerebus penciled and inked by Dave Sim. The Spirit and Commissioner Dolan penciled and inked by Will Eisner. Backgrounds by Gerhard. Story and lettering by Dave Sim. Autographed by Eisner, Sim and Gerhard.

pen and ink on illustration board

minimum bid: $150

COMIC BOOK LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

THE SOUND OF CEREBUS' FOOT MAKING CONTACT WITH THE SPIRIT'S KNEE WAS LIKE DRY KINDLING HITTING A BONFIRE.
IT ALSO BROUGHT HIM A FOOT AND A HALF CLOSER TO THE FLOOR
THE SPIRIT. ? WELL, HE JUST WOUND UP WITH A PUNCH HE USED TO SAVE FOR PUTTING FIST-SIZED HOLES IN TWO-BY-FOURS AT THE CARNIVAL.
IT TOOK OUT THE LAST SEVEN WEEKS WORTH OF PAPER-WORK ON DOLAN'S DESK...
BUT NOT CEREBUS.

GALLERY

THEY CONTINUED BASHING EACH OTHER WITH FURNITURE AND PUTTING HOLES IN THE PLASTER A WHILE...
AND THEN IT WAS ME WHO CALLED A HALT TO THE PROCEEDINGS...
...BY PAYING CEREBUS' FINE MYSELF. DOLAN WASN'T TOO PLEASED, OF COURSE.
THE SPIRIT WAS BESIDE HIMSELF, AND CEREBUS, OF COURSE, HE JUST LEFT WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A THANK-YOU. WHICH WOULD PROBABLY HAVE BOTHERED SOME FOLKS
BUT I'VE BEEN KEEPING THINGS CLEAN FOR A LOT OF YEARS...
WILL EISNER
...AND IF THERE'S ANYTHING I DON'T NEED IT'S A LOT OF EXTRA WORK...

CEREBUS JAM
number one (1985)
page twenty-four

Cerebus,
Commissioner
Dolan,
the Spirit

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JULY 12 INDIANAPOLIS

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YOU..
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AND CIRIN
KING'S PAWN TO KING FOUR..

CEREBUS

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